

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1438

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 7499

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, PINT, PE

SUBJECT: GOP NAMES NEW TRANSPORT MINISTER

REF: LIMA 7409

1. FOLLOWING THE FUNERAL OF GENERAL ARTEMIO GARCIA VARGAS AUGUST 16, THE GOP DESIGNATED ARMY BRIGADIER GENERAL ELIVIO VANNINI CHUMPITAZI AS NEW MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS. HE WAS SWORN IN AUGUST 17. GENERAL VANNINI HAS BEEN PRESIDENT OF THE ADVISORY COMMISSION TO THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS AND OFTEN ACCOMPANIED GENERAL GARCIA VARGAS ON WORKING TRIPS. UPON BEING DESIGNATED MINISTER, VANNINI SAID THAT HE WOULD CARRY ON THE WORK BEGUN BY GENERAL GARCIA VARGAS AND WOULD "WORK FOR THE ADVANCE AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS".

2. GENERAL VANNINI (BORN JULY 5, 1919 IN LIMA) RECEIVED A CIVIL ENGINEERING DEGREE FROM THE NATIONAL ENGINEERING UNIVERSITY IN 1949. FROM 1950 UNTIL 1969 HE HELD A VARIETY OF ASSIGNMENTS IN THE ENGINEERING FIELD. IN 1969-70 HE WAS DIRECTOR OF THE ENGINEERING SCHOOL OF THE PERUVIAN MILITARY TRAINING CENTER (CIMP), AND IN 1971-72 HE BECAME CHIEF OF THE COORDINATION GROUP FOR THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARMY. HE STUDIED AT THE PERUVIAN WAR COLLEGE (CAEM) IN 1973. PROMOTED TO BRIGADIER GENERAL IN 1974, HE WAS ASSIGNED CHIEF OF ARMY ENGINEERS. HIS LATEST POSITION HAS BEEN PRESIDENT OF THE ADVISORY COMMISSION TO THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND

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COMMUNICATIONS.

3. GENERAL VANNINI IS CONSIDERED TO BE HIGHLY RESPECTED AMONG ARMY ENGINEERS; HIS STANDING OUTSIDE THIS SELECT GROUP IS UNKNOWN. HE APPEARS TO BE A SELF-ASSURED, SMOOTH-TALKING AND COMPETENT INDIVIDUAL. HE HAS RISEN THROUGH THE RANKS IN AN ORDERLY, UNEVENTFUL FASHION, APPARENTLY BY DINT OF HARD WORK. IN VIEW OF HIS EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE, IT APPEARS THAT THE GOP HAS CHOSEN A QUALIFIED TECHNOCRAT FOR THE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS PORTFOLIO. VANNINI HAS NOT HELD TROOP COMMANDS BUT HAS HAD PREDOMINANTLY STAFF OFFICER POSITIONS DURING A LONG CAREER. THE NEW MINISTER IS NOT EXPECTED TO ENGAGE IN SPECTACULAR ACTIVITIES, BUT SHOULD BRING A PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO THE JOB. HE WOULD THUS FIT WELL INTO THE CURRENT GOP CABINET. IF THESE EXPECTATIONS PROVE CORRECT, THE NEW MINISTER MIGHT PROVE TO BE HELPFUL, AS GARCIA VARGAS WAS, IN VARIOUS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE U.S. INVOLVING TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS.

4. THE GENERAL HAS AN ERECT BEARING. HE IS OF MEDIUM HEIGHT AND WEIGHT AND IS CLEAN-SHAVEN. HE IS APPARENTLY QUITE AMIABLE IN COMPANY, ENJOYS CONVERSATION AND EXPRESSES HIS OPINIONS FORCEFULLY, WITHOUT HESITATION. THE GENERAL IS A BACHELOR. THE NEW MINISTER IS SAID TO BE A COUSIN OF EX-FISHERIES MINISTER TANTALEAN VANNINI, WHO WAS RECENTLY TAINTED BY FISCAL SCANDALS RELATING TO HIS ADMINISTRATION OF THE FISHERIES MINISTRY. (EX-MINISTER TANTALEAN IS ALSO A BROTHER-IN-LAW OF PRIME MINISTER ARBULU.)

5. THE GENERAL HAS VISITED THE U.S. TWICE, FIRST IN 1967 AS A MEMBER OF A STUDY COMMISSION, AND AGAIN IN 1973, AS THE RANKING OFFICER IN A CAEM ORIENTATION TOUR. HE HAS BEEN CONSIDERED FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD THE U.S. SMIOH

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